

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Douglas Machine LLP

Enterprise Minnesota

Enterprise Minnesota Helps Douglas Machine Increase Sales and Jobs Through Training Within Industry Program

Client Profile:

Founded in 1964, Douglas Machine, Inc. uses many patented and patent-pending technologies to produce paperboard, corrugated, and shrink-film packaging solutions primarily for the food and beverage industries. The company operates in Alexandria and Deerwood, Minnesota, employs 500 people, and has sold and installed over 6,000 of their packaging machines to companies located in more than 30 countries.

Situation:

Douglas Machine's biggest challenge was efficiently managing the cost of growth. In the last few years, Enterprise Minnesota, formerly known as Minnesota Technology, Inc., a NIST MEP network affiliate, trained Douglas employees on Continuous Improvement concepts, and Douglas incorporated many aspects of Lean thinking in their manufacturing operation to improve products, services, and processes to be more efficient. Enterprise Minnesota suggested they take the next step and upgrade the skills of Douglas' supervisors by providing them with Training Within Industry (TWI) training before they proceed with implementing additional continuous improvement initiatives. TWI is a Lean-based training program that provides the framework for employees to succeed in applying Lean principles into their daily work life. TWI consists of three standardized programs: Job Methods, Job Instruction, and Job Relations. Job Methods teaches supervisors how to improve the way jobs are done by utilizing people, machines, and materials efficiently. Job Instruction shows supervisors how to train employees to do their job safely and accurately. Job Relations helps supervisors build positive employee relations, successfully resolve conflicts, and increase motivation and cooperation.

Solution:

After learning about the three components of TWI, Douglas management decided to offer the training to its supervisors. Enterprise Minnesota developed a training program for Douglas, and over a period of 10 months, provided hands-on training to 12 employees. The practical and constructive nature of the training has resulted in increased productivity and efficiencies in the supervisory staff that has filtered down into the entire manufacturing process.

Results:

- * Increased sales by \$11.7 million.
- * Realized \$230,000 in cost savings.
- * Created 32 jobs.

Testimonial:

www.mep.nist.gov



NIST is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce

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"The participants who took part in the training were extremely impressed with the quality of the instruction; it was practical and useful in their daily activities at Douglas Machine. In terms of its usefulness and practicality, I would give it very high marks. I would also give high-marks to the instructors from Enterprise Minnesota who provided quality hands-on training."

Rick Paulsen, CEO